

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

INFO USINT CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 035705

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP, PFOR, EG, UK

SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN REQUEST FOR SUEZ CANAL MINE
CLEARANCE ASSISTANCE

1. IN KEEPING WITH US INTEREST IN SEEING SUEZ CANAL RE-
OPENED, DEPT. AND DOD COORDINATED RESPONSE TO RECENT
EGYPTIAN REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE ON MINE CLEARANCE IN SUEZ
CANAL BY SENDING SIX MAN MILITARY TEAM OF DEMOLITION
EXPERTS (FOUR NAVY AND TWO ARMY) TO EGYPT. TEAM ARRIVED
IN EGYPT FEB. 19 AND IS UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO EXPLORE
DIMENSIONS OF PROBLEM AND TO REPORT FINDINGS TO WASHINGTON.
WE HAVE AVOIDED MAKING ANY FURTHER COMMITMENTS TO
EGYPTIANS PENDING A REVIEW OF TEAM'S FINDINGS.

2. EGYPTIANS HAVE APPROACHED UK AND OTHER COUNTRIES WITH
SIMILAR REQUEST FOR MINE CLEARANCE AID, AND WE UNDERSTAND
BRITISH HAVE ALSO RESPONDED WITH OFFER TO SEND SURVEY TEAM.
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WE AND THE UK HAVE AGREED TO KEEP ONE ANOTHER INFORMED OF

DEVELOPMENTS, AND WE HAVE INDICATED TO UK OUR WILLINGNESS TO EXPLORE US-UK COOPERATIVE EFFORT IN MINE CLEARANCE WORK.

3. SHOULD REVIEW OF TEAM FINDINGS RESULT IN U.S. DECISION TO MOVE AHEAD ON EGYPTIAN REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE, WE WILL NEED TO HAVE ISRAELI COOPERATION. AFTER PRELIMINARY CONTACT WITH EGYPTIANS, TEAM HAS ALREADY REPORTED THAT, ON

ITS RETURN TO US, INFORMATION ON ISRAELI MINING IN CANAL REGION WILL BE NEEDED IN ORDER TO DEFINE PROBLEM AREAS. IF EMBASSY PERCEIVES NO OBJECTIONS, WE BELIEVE BEST WAY TO HANDLE WILL BE FOR DAO TEL AVIV TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH APPROPRIATE ISRAELI COUNTERPART WHO CAN FURNISH INFORMATION ON TYPE OF MINES USED AND THEIR LOCATION. SPECIFIC QUESTIONS WILL BE FORWARDED BY SEPTTEL. RECOMMEND THAT EMBASSY ASSIST EFFORT NOW BY INFORMING MFA OF STEPS TAKEN THUS FAR BY US IN RESPONSE TO EGYPTIAN REQUEST FOR MINE CLEARANCE ASSISTANCE, AND REQUESTING MFA COOPERATION IN CANAL OPENING ENDEAVOR WHICH WE BELIEVE IS IN ISRAELI AS WELL AS US INTEREST.

4. INFORMATION ON TEAM AS WELL AS PRESS GUIDANCE BEING FORWARDED BY SEPTELS.

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